

PENNYWORTH

Episode 101
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"Episode 101"

FADE IN:

A OLD FASHIONED COLOR PRINTING PRESS prints out a stream of paper Union Jacks. Blue ink, then white, then red; then THE BLACK SILHOUETTE OF A RAVEN, wings spread, is stamped on the center of the flags. The flags are attached to little sticks and put in bundles. Ready for a national celebration.

EXT. COTSWOLDS HUNT COUNTRY - DAY

Rolling green hills. Dark woodland.

MONTAGE - A FOX HUNT

In a SUNDAPPLIED COPSE of Oak and Sycamore, A RED FOX dines on an unlucky PHEASANT. O.S THE BAYING WAIL of FOXHOUNDS makes the Fox look up. A HUNTING HORN SOUNDS. The Fox sprints away.

A PACK OF HOUNDS come howling over and through a tall HEDGEROW. Then a thundering torrent of THOROUGHbred HORSES leap the hedge at full gallop, SCARLET CLAD RIDERS clinging on for dear life, the hunting horn blasting away ecstatically.

A pile of yowling dogs tear at the mangled corpse of the Fox. A HUNT SERVANT dashes in and whips the dogs off, retrieves the dead fox.

A YOUNG NOVICE RIDER tries not flinch as the HUNTMASTER uses the Fox's tail for a ritual blooding, daubing the youngster's face with fresh gore.

The elegant mounted Riders drink Pimms from saddle cups and jovially relive the adventures of the day...

Aristocratic rural bliss.

END MONTAGE ON...

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

TWO MOUNTED RIDERS wave goodbye and separate, coming home from the hunt. We follow one of the riders - LORD RUPERT FAIRFAX, early 40s, every inch the suave aristocrat in his scarlet coat, mounted on a black stallion.

A GREY JAGUAR comes down the adjacent country lane blasting Pop Music.

The Jaguar drives through an open gate into the field and stops.

A man and a woman get out of the car.

The DRIVER is massive and menacing but bland and bespectacled, like the scariest trainspotter you ever saw.

BET SYKES 40s, is a fearsome blonde with a hard face under angry black eyebrows.

Fairfax, vexed by the intruders, gallops across the field toward them. They wait calmly. Sykes does a discreet little shimmying dance to the music on the radio.

FAIRFAX

Good afternoon. You're on my land.

BET SYKES

Yes pet, I know.

FAIRFAX

Oh do you? Well off with you then.

BET SYKES

What if I don't?

FAIRFAX

Another bloody animal rights oik, are you?

BET SYKES

No. Animals don't have rights.

The Driver pulls Fairfax from his horse and throws him to the ground, gives him a single disabling PUNCH on the nose.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

Steady, boy.

Sykes strokes the horse then smacks its flanks to send it galloping away.

She picks up Fairfax's riding crop and stands over the stunned man...

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

Nobody has rights really, do they?
Every bugger for 'emself, far as I
can see.

FAIRFAX

Are you mad? Do you know who I am?

BET SYKES
I should hope so duck. If you're
not Lord Fairfax, I'm in for a
right bollocking. Are you?

She hits him with the crop. He yelps in pain and shock.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)
Are you?

FAIRFAX
Yes.

BET SYKES
Yes. Not so chuffy now.

FAIRFAX
Who are you?

BET SYKES
Oh, I'm nobody, me. You, you've
been a bad boy. You've to come with
us.

Fairfax understands who sent her now, and he's even more
scared.

FAIRFAX
No.

He starts to scramble away on all fours. Sykes follows,
irked.

BET SYKES
Today's my day off. I could be at
home with my feet up. No says the
gaffer. Job on. We've to come out
here, bloody roadworks all the way,
to fetch you. Don't you give me
trouble now. I'll be vexed.

As he gets to his feet, she calmly kicks him over again.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)
Never mind the petrol money. Will
they reimburse me? Will they heck.

EXT. COTSWOLDS - DAY

Lord Fairfax's RIDERLESS HORSE GALLOPS wild-eyed across open
country.

EXT. JUNGLE WAR ZONE FOXHOLE - NIGHT

The moon is full, but on the jungle floor it's dark.

Four SOLDIERS crouched in a mud and water foxhole.

Heartbreakingly young, ALFIE, DAVE BOY, BAZZA, and SPANISH are hardened combat veterans. Heavy hostile contact has already been made and our boys are muddied, bloodied, and hyped up, a little scared. Waiting, listening raptly, silently, for something or someone.

We go in tight on Alfie - ALFRED PENNYWORTH.

ALFRED
(whispering)
I think they're gone.

EXT. LONDON - DAY

Early morning. We're looking at the THAMES from a DOCKSIDE ON LIMEHOUSE REACH.

The turbid brown river is on the ebb, speeding seaward.

Tower Bridge looms upriver. The City beyond is a dark range of roofs and steeples, all shadows and smoke.

On the dock wall: a neatly folded MILITARY DRESS UNIFORM and a pair of SHINY BLACK SOLDIER'S BOOTS.

A man's head appears from underwater about twenty yards out and he swims strongly toward the shore.

ALFRED PENNYWORTH emerges from the water naked, wades up onto the narrow mud beach, picks up a towel and dries himself briskly. His torso is scarred with bullet and shrapnel wounds.

He dresses.

Alfred's late 20s, wiry, handsome. A cheerful, charming, ambitious, and clever young man. Honest, open faced, drily witty; you'd never take him for a SAS killer. But that's what he was. For all his worldly experience, Alfred's been a soldier since he was sixteen, and he's a little lost in the civilian world.

PRELAP: A MILITARY BAND plays LILI MARLENE. The regimental march of the British Special Air Service (SAS).

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A military FUNERAL in a small cemetery inside the grounds of St. James' Palace.

The BAND playing Lili Marlene, the PALLBEARERS, and the HONOR GUARD are all wearing BLACK BALACLAVAS.

We focus on one of the pallbearers - Alfred - All we see are his sad eyes.

HALF AN HOUR LATER

The funeral's over. ALFRED and two other soldiers are left standing mournfully by the grave passing 'round a flask, their balaclavas tucked into their epaulettes. We recognise them from the jungle foxhole.

WALLACE 'DAVE BOY' MACDOUGAL *is a haggard Glaswegian Celtic supporter in his mid 30s, slowly drinking himself to death.*

MARCUS 'BAZZA' BARTHOLOMEW, *late 20s, Handsome Oxford educated son of Bajan aristocracy. A playboy with an air of languidly serene boredom.*

Dave Boy pours a slug of whiskey on the grave.

DAVE BOY
Slainte, you bastard. It's only
Johnny Walker, sorry.

He takes a long slug himself.

DAVE BOY (CONT'D)
Of all the boys to take that way
out. Always smiling like a fecking
idiot.

BAZZA
Second chap this year.

ALFRED
What? I thought it was a car crash.

BAZZA
Broad daylight, a lamppost, best
driver in the regiment. Quod erat
old boy.

DAVE BOY
When I go, give us a good drop eh?
None of this cheap piss.

Dave Boy takes a long slug of whiskey, grimaces.

DAVE BOY (CONT'D)

I tell you what, this civvy life is hard going. Sometimes I wisht I was back in the jungle.

ALFRED

Give over Dave Boy. There's a whole world out there for us. We're free men.

DAVE BOY

You've been watching too much telly.

BAZZA

Doing well then are you, Alfie?

ALFRED

Can't grumble Bazza. I've started up a security firm. Business cards and all that. Early days.

BAZZA

Dear boy, you're far too soft hearted to be a businessman.

ALFRED

I can be hard when I need to be.

Bazza and Dave chuckle.

BAZZA

Do you recall those Malaysian pirates?

ALFRED

Fair play. They were good lads.

DAVE BOY

Too soft Alfie. You'll be eaten up.

ALFRED

We'll see, won't we? Tossers.

EXT. LONDON - DAY

ESTABLISHING MONTAGE

ALFRED - in a crombie, tux, and bow tie - makes his way on foot across the grimy and glamorous city.

The moment is 1962 or thereabouts, but in this alternative universe, British history has played out differently. This London is 13 degrees weirder, darker and wilder than our own.

There's a SKELETON swinging in an IRON GIBBET on London Bridge. In Trafalgar Square, NELSON has his foot on a DEAD FRENCHMAN. The MARBLE LIONS that guard him are snarling, ready to attack. In Piccadilly Circus, EROS has DEVIL'S HORNS on his forehead. Moored to the spire of St Pauls is a BARRAGE BALLOON advertising Marmite. Beefeaters carry submachine guns. Lord Lucan is Prime Minister. Edward and Wallis Simpson are powers in the land. Sherlock Holmes is in a Lunatic Asylum, and Moriarty is a Scotland Yard Detective. The Ripper Family are respectable East End businessmen.

Londoners wear their clothes like uniforms, making class divisions and trades obvious and pictureseque. Everyone dresses the part; from gangsters to aristocrats, rent boys to shop girls.

EXT. THE HIGH LIFE NIGHTCLUB - WEST END - NIGHT

ESTABLISHING. A glittering neon lit high society night-spot just off Shaftesbury Avenue.

WE FIND ALFRED standing at the door just out of the pouring rain. He's a BOUNCER.

A staggering DRUNK considers entering the club, and Alfred waves him along amiably. The drunk obeys. Alfred opens the door for a young AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN. A beat, and an oily mustachioed MANAGER steps out.

MANAGER

Pennyworth, you're opening the door too abruptly. We open like so...

(he demonstrates)

With discreet panache.

ALFRED

Discreet panache it is sir.

The Manager disappears inside the double doors of the club. Alfred has a quiet moment to watch the RAIN fall and contemplate his lowly status and high ambitions. He opens the door with discreet panache for several glamorous couples.

Every times the doors open we hear a big band playing 'Love Is A Losing Game'.

The Manager disappears inside the double doors of the club. Alfred has a quiet moment to watch the RAIN fall and contemplate his lowly status and high ambitions. He opens doors for a GLAMOROUS COUPLE.

A beat later, the Manager pokes his head 'round the door, beckons urgently.

INT. THE GOLDEN SLIPPER NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

A fashionable hot spot in full swing. Big enough for a floor show and dancing.

A SIX piece band and a DRAG QUEEN SINGER with TWO slinky GIRL DANCERS in sequins deliver 'Love Is A Losing Game'.

Louche, well dressed punters. The sporting crowd - showbiz celebrities, footballers, gangsters, decadent aristos.

AT A CORNER BOOTH - The Young American Busienssman is in an altercation with two men and a young woman.

His name's THOMAS WAYNE. Mid 20s, clean cut, fresh faced, in a Brooks Brothers suit, hat and coat in hand. He's an East Coast aristocrat billionaire, imperious but honourable and impeccably polite. Square, disciplined, punctilious, analytical. His friends call him Thomas.

Blond, elegant, lost, PATRICIA WAYNE, late 20s, is drinking herself to oblivion with TWO MODLY DRESSED HUSTLERS, waiting like vultures for the right moment to swoop.

VIC and LEE 20s, are handsome and feral in slim cut italian suits.

Vic has flustered but stubborn Thomas Wayne by the lapel.

VIC

Are you deaf, mate?

Alfred glides over.

ALFRED

Good evening, Madame. Gentlemen.
Having a pleasant evening?

THOMAS

Sir, this woman is my sister and these men are, I don't know who they are, or what their agenda is. But she's drunk, and I would like to take her to a safe place.

PATRICIA

Jesus Tommy, what kind of a weird fascist are you? You followed me all the way to goddamn Europe?

THOMAS

I'm here on business.

PATRICIA
Aren't you all grown up.
(to Alfred)
I don't know this man. You can go.

Alfred is calm, amiable.

ALFRED
That true miss? He's your brother?

PATRICIA
So what if he is?

ALFRED
Well, there's nothing more
important than family is there?
Apart from your health, of course.
Right lads?

He gives Vic and Lee a look.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
You've got to have your health,
haven't you? Exercise. Fresh air.
That's the thing. A good long walk.

VIC
Lot of front for a door monkey.

Alfred gives him just a shade of another self.

ALFRED
Don't be like that. I'm trying to
help you.

Alfred doesn't take his eyes off Vic, who sees behind the
placid gaze and doesn't like his chances. Blinks. Sneers.
Looks to Patricia.

VIC
Catch you later, babes.

He and his boys slide away with as much dignity as they can
muster.

EXT. GOLDEN SLIPPER NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Alfred and Thomas come through the doors with Patricia
struggling between them.

PATRICIA
Leave me alone!

Patricia throws an angry fist at her brother, misses him, and hits Alfred on the nose, quite hard.

THOMAS
Patricia, control yourself!

She busts into tears and falls into his arms. Thomas holds her gently.

Alfred helps Thomas pour Patricia into a taxi.

INT. THE HIGH LIFE NIGHTCLUB - FOYER - NIGHT

Alfred enters clutching his nose.

Thomas hurries back in, searching his pockets.

THOMAS
I'm sorry, I didn't get your name.

ALFRED
Pennyworth, sir. Alfred Pennyworth.

THOMAS
Alfred, thank you so much for your assistance. I apologize for my sister's behavior. I hope you're not seriously hurt.

He offers Alfred a thin wad of notes. Alfred takes it.

ALFRED
I'm fine sir, thank you.

Thomas peers at Alfred's nose.

THOMAS
I don't know about that. You're bruising up round the eyes there.

He searches his wallet...

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Fudge. Out of cards. Let me give you my phone number. You should get some ice on that.

Thomas scribbles a number on an old random business card, from his pockets, hands it to Alfred.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
If you have any medical expenses, or other issues, please call me. I accept full liability.
(MORE)

THOMAS (CONT'D)

No need to involve lawyers. Good to meet you Albert.

Thomas starts to walk away. Alfred looks at the business card.

INSERT - On one side, an electrical contractors address and phone, on the back a neatly scribbled name and number - THOMAS WAYNE.

Alfred remembers he's in business himself.

ALFRED

Mr. Wayne?

Alfred extracts a business card and offers it to Thomas.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

My card. Pennyworth Security.

Clearly uninterested, Thomas pockets Alfred's card with the merest glance.

THOMAS

Thank you so much.

Thomas exits. Alfred sits down, vaguely depressed by the whole experience. HIS NOSE STARTS TO BLEED.

ALFRED

Dammit.

He holds his head back to stem the flow.

EXT. JUNGLE WAR ZONE FOX HOLE - DAY

Alfred and his three companions. As before, listening intently. Everybody starts to relax by degrees. Alfred is squad leader.

ALFRED

Everyone alright?

A murmur of assent.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Make us a brew Dave Boy, then we'll head for the river.

DAVE BOY

Why's it always me has to make the tea eh? I'm not your fecking gran.

SPANISH

Go on, tastes better when you make it.

Dave Boy starts setting up a little solid fuel stove.

DAVE BOY

That's because I spunk in it
Spanish. Reminds you of your dad.

They all laugh, but not too loud. Spanish stands and stretches. An uncanny howl from a JUNGLE ANIMAL nearby makes them jump, then listen intently.

ESME (O.S.)

D'you need a hanky?

END FLASHBACK

INT. HIGHLIFE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

ESME WHITTAKER is one of the dancers, on a break. Shabby chic overcoat over her sequined costume, cigarette in hand. A bohemian air. She offers Alfred a big white handkerchief. She's beautiful, alert, theatrical, clever and speaks with an old school posh accent.

ALFRED

Thank you.

He mops his face with the handkerchief.

ESME

Did someone hit you?

ALFRED

Thursday night's always a bit
naughty. Usually, I duck.

(points at himself.)

Alfred.

ESME

Esme.

ALFRED

Has it stopped?

ESME

Yes.

ALFRED

I'll have this cleaned.

ESME

Thank you.

ALFRED

I'll give it back Saturday if you like.

ESME

I don't work Saturday.

ALFRED

Me neither. We could meet in the park. It's going to be a nice day.

ESME

That's rather forward of you.

ALFRED

No, I saw the weather forecast. Sunshine.

EXT. HOUSE OF LORDS - DAY

ESTABLISHING

Sinister soot blackened spires under lowering storm clouds.

EXT. CARRIAGE ENTRANCE - DAY

THREE LORDS emerge from a gothic portico and climb into waiting Rolls Royces. Red velvet and ermine cloaks over Savile Row suits. People hurry get out of their way, not with formal deference but with fear, as if they were Mafia Dons. They emanate raw power.

We zero in on one of the Lords as he waits to get into his Rolls Royce.

LORD HARWOOD *is in his mid 40s, cultured, urbane, brilliant, a little mad, and supremely sure of himself. James Mason playing Enoch Powell.*

INT. BASEMENT RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Lord Harwood enters via a steep flight of stairs.

Windowless. Cheap flock wallpaper. Mismatched furniture. Linoleum floor. Several doors and hallways lead off in different directions. A couple of GREY SUITED THUGS leap up respectfully when Harwood enters. One of them takes Harwood's red cape. WE follow Harwood down a hallway to a door numbered 101.

INT. ROOM 101 - DAY

Harwood enters a strange cross between a torture chamber and a local government office. Utilitarian mismatched couches and chairs. Benches. Tea making facilities. Horrid stains on the wall. A fish tank. Obscure instruments of torture stored on shelves. Shackles bolted to the walls. Ceiling hoists. Rats in cages. Sinister metal masks.

LORD FAIRFAX is naked, deeply demoralised, tied to an iron and wood chair bolted to the floor.

In BG: PARSLOW - A middle aged man who looks very like a tax accountant - prepares an array of torture devices.

Harwood sits down opposite Fairfax, who tries to meet his Gaze with dignified contempt.

HARWOOD

(sincerely)

My dear friend. I'm deeply saddened to see you in such circumstances. Why Rupert? Why did you betray us?

FAIRFAX

Go to hell Harwood.

HARWOOD

We have people very close to you. Very close. We know you talked to someone about our plans. We just don't know who. That's why we're here. I need a name. And I want to understand why. Did you become afraid?

Fairfax takes a long beat.

FAIRFAX

Not for myself. Afraid for my country. Afraid of what you'll do if given the chance.

HARWOOD

You were wrong to be afraid. There are glorious days ahead.

FAIRFAX

Here we are. In this room. I wasn't wrong.

Harwood's dismissive.

HARWOOD

If you weren't wrong, you wouldn't
be here would you?. Who did you
talk to? Give me a name.

Fairfax closes his eyes. Harwood sighs.

INT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - MORNING

Alfred in undershirt and pajama bottoms at the breakfast
table. Mum's going through laundry. Dad's putting the final
touches on his formal butler's uniform, drinking his tea
carefully the while.

*MRS. P, late 40s, is a quietly feisty London Irish Princess
with a veneer of gentility from twenty years in service as a
cook.*

*MR. P is a BUTLER, early 60s, Whitechapel born and bred.
Coming up to retirement. A proud, stiff, stubborn, immensely
capable man coming to terms with the end of his working life.
Proud as he is of his spirited and independent-minded son,
Alfred's ambitions are a tacit rebuke to a life spent in
service.*

MRS PENNYWORTH

Blood.

She's holding up Esme's handkerchief.

ALFRED

Yes, mum.

She smells the handkerchief.

MRS PENNYWORTH

This belongs to a woman.

ALFRED

Yes, mum.

MR PENNYWORTH

And so the sordid debauchery
begins.

MRS PENNYWORTH

Whose blood is it?

ALFRED

Don't worry. It's mine.

MRS PENNYWORTH

(unappeased)
Oh, that's alright then.

MR PENNYWORTH

What can you expect? Out all hours wrestling yobbos.

ALFRED

I'm not... It's a business. I'm starting a business.

MR PENNYWORTH

Business. Where's your capital? Where's your staff? Where's your profits? You're a bouncer.

ALFRED

Security consultant.

MR PENNYWORTH

With your family name and war record, you could find a very nice position in a good household. Chauffeur, head footman, world's your oyster. Do right, and you're butler before you're forty. But no.

ALFRED

I want to be my own man.

MR PENNYWORTH

(nettled)
Meaning I'm not.

ALFRED

(yes)
I didn't say that.

MR PENNYWORTH

Nobody's their own man. Not me. Not you. Nobody.

ALFRED

Times change.

MR PENNYWORTH

No. They don't.

MRS PENNYWORTH

Hush up the pair of you. You're giving me the migraine. Who's this woman then?

ALFRED

What woman?

EXT. PARK - DAY

Alfred waits on park bench. A lovely day, as promised.

Esme approaches smiling tentatively. Out of costume, she's a hipster Bloomsbury Bohemian, her hair down, ethnic jewelry. Alfred rises from a bench. Dressed properly, jacket and tie. She's very self-conscious, skittish.

ALFRED

Here you are then.

ESME

Here I am.

He hands her the handkerchief, laundered.

EXT. PARK LAKE - DAY

Alfred and Esme in a rowing boat on the lake.

ALFRED

So, dancing, eh? Must be a lark.

ESME

Oh, God, no. We're just writhing about. Frightfully vulgar.

ALFRED

Looks good to me.

ESME

It pays the rent. I won't be dependent on my parents. I was with Sadler's Wells, but I got too hippy. I'm an actress now. An actor. Trying to be.

ALFRED

Oh. That's why you talk like that.

ESME

What d'you mean?

ALFRED

Well, I was thinking maybe you're just being la di da, because dancers don't need to talk posh do they? But acting, different. That's the job innit.

ESME

I'm not talking posh. This is my normal accent.

ALFRED

Oh. Well it's a very nice accent.
So, you're an actress?

ESME

Just silly things, so far. I'm
rehearsing a play now that might be
quite good. My part is good anyhow.
It's only a tiny little pub
theater, but you never know.

ALFRED

I like a good play. What's that one
with the pirate and the crocodile?

ESME

Peter Pan?

ALFRED

That's the one. Saw it in the Army.
The crocodile's always creeping up
on people. Behind you! You'd swear
it was a real animal. Bloody good
show.

ESME

You were in the army?

ALFRED

Nine years.

She looks unhappy.

ESME

I'm against all that.

ALFRED

Against all what?

ESME

Wars and armies and killing, the
whole grotesque charade.

EXT. FOX HOLE - NIGHT

Spanish turns to Alfred.

SPANISH

One of these days I'm going to ki.

Spanish is hit in the temple by a high caliber bullet and his
head vanishes.

EXT. BOATING LAKE - DAY

Alfred simply blinks, raises his hands amiably.

ALFRED

You'll get no argument here. Worst thing? The food.

ESME

You're making fun of me.

ALFRED

Making fun with you. Different.

She studies him, conflicted...

ESME

Did you ever... You know.

Alfred is unafraid to answer.

ALFRED

Now and then.

Repulsed fascination from Esme.

ESME

You've killed people.

ALFRED

Came with the job.

ESME

How can you... Didn't it bother you?

ALFRED

Still does.

(beat)

When I got my first gun, the Sarn't Major said 'This not your gun. This is the Queen's gun. These bullets are the Queen's bullets'. I was working for the Queen. Makes it alright. D'you see?

ESME

No. Not really.

ALFRED

I'll have no more to do with it now. Violence. No more. Peaceful life for me. You've no worries there.

ESME
You do seem like a gentle man.

ALFRED
Give us some of your play then.

ESME
Oh, heavens, no.

ALFRED
Go on. Please.

ESME
Really, no.

ALFRED
What's your character called?

ESME
The Sister.

ALFRED
'The Sister'. Big part is it?

Esme slides into her performance...

ESME
'You're blind, Johnny. Blind. You can't see me. Me, damn you! You see only a mask. A glittering mirrored mask of your own dark polluted soul.'

ALFRED
Steady on.

ESME
'Don't cry? Don't cry? Fuck you, Johnny. I would drown you in my tears if I could. I would kill you.'

She cuts the scene, goes back to being Esme.

ESME (CONT'D)
Anyway. Something like that.

Alfred stares at her, taken aback.

ALFRED
No crocodiles then.

ESME
No. No animals at all, I'm afraid.

ALFRED

That was very good. I was scared.

ESME

Thank you.

INT. ESME'S BEDSIT - NIGHT

A proto-hippy den of scarves and candles and pillows.

Esme and Alfred kiss and take off each other's clothes.

They make love.

EXT. BELGRAVIA STREET - DAY

A terrified SCHOOLBOY - in shorts, striped blazer and cap - is chased down the street by Bet Sykes.

The Jaguar keeps pace, a few yards back.

EXT. JAGUAR - (IN MOTION) - DAY

The RADIO's playing perky pop. The Schoolboy's in the back seat, tied up. Quivering with fear.

Bet Sykes is flustered from the chase and takes a moment to adjust herself and do her face before she swivels to look at her captive.

BET SYKES

(to the Driver)

Bless him, poor lad's pissed himself.

(to the boy)

No need for embarrassment. I've seen plenty of big strong men do same thing.

The boy says nothing.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

Would you like a boiled sweet?

The boy shakes his head.

INT. ROOM 101 - CONTINUOUS

LORD FAIRFAX is still tied down to the iron chair, bearing the scars and wounds of several days of torture. Clinging to life.

Lord Harwood sits down opposite.

HARWOOD

I saw your last varsity match. You took four wickets. Quite the glamor boy. All the women were madly in love. We often wondered why you married Philippa. Top notch family, of course. But not your type at all. Chilly. If I brought Philippa in here I suspect you'd let all sorts of things happen to her before you'd talk. Of course, Philippa is our informant so we wouldn't do that. A barren marriage, is it not? A terrible bleak phrase. Leaves a hole, I should think. Emotionally.

Fairfax looks at Harwood, fearfully. Where's this going?

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

But correct me if I'm wrong, it's Philippa that has the problem, isn't it? You're perfectly capable of siring children.

Beat. Now Fairfax knows where this is going.

FAIRFAX

(whispers)

No.

HARWOOD

No? You're not?

Harwood presses an intercom button...

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

Come in, Sykes.

(to Fairfax)

Perhaps, we've been given faulty information.

Bet Sykes enters with the BLINDFOLDED Schoolboy. Fairfax is horrified.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

Good day to you young man.

No reply.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

Don't be scared. Nobody wants to hurt you.

(MORE)

HARWOOD (CONT'D)
This is a matter of state security.
I need you to be entirely honest
with me. What's your name?

SCHOOLBOY
M-Martin, sir. Martin Falconer.

HARWOOD
What's your father's name?

The boy hesitates awkwardly.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)
You do know who your father is,
don't you?

SCHOOLBOY
Yes, sir.

HARWOOD
You're a bastard, are you?

Fairfax is in torment. The boy summons some strength in his voice.

SCHOOLBOY
Yes, sir, I am. My father's a very
important man. I'm not, he's not,
he's not at liberty...

A loud wordless primitive groan of anguish from Fairfax makes the Schoolboy fall silent.

Fairfax looks at Harwood in plaintive defeat. Nods in submission.

HARWOOD
That'll be all, Martin. You're a
brave boy. And you've done your
country a great service.
(nods to Sykes)
Thank you, Sykes.

Sykes leads the bewildered boy from the room.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)
A fine young man. You must be
proud.

Harwood leans in to Fairfax...

HARWOOD (CONT'D)
Give me the name.

FAIRFAX
(a whisper)
Thomas Wayne.

INT. PARK LANE HOTEL - ROOM - DAY

A luxurious suite.

Thomas Wayne feverishly engrossed in studying and taking notes from a small stack of financial ledgers and papers. The phone rings. He answers reluctantly.

THOMAS
(a silent sigh)
Hello MRS PENNYWORTH.
(listens)
Yes, I put her on the plane three hours ago. She was spitting mad but sober at least.
(listens)
Work's going fine. I believe I might have uncovered a large fraud. In fact I'm working on it right now, so maybe I should---
(listens)
Oh? Did she? Well, send her my regards
(listens, sighs)
No MRS PENNYWORTH, just regards.

He leans back and the coffee mug in his hand EXPLODES. He stares at the handle in his hand, then at the bullet hole in the window. He throws himself to the floor.

The phone is right in front of him on the floor.

TINNY MOM ON PHONE (O.S.)
Hello? Thomas? Hello?

Thomas picks up the phone receiver...

THOMAS
I have to go. Love you.

He cuts off the call. Then, with great caution, he crawls across the floor and closes the curtains. Through his fear, he takes a beat to steady himself and think carefully.

Then he starts grabbing up all the files and account books and stuffing them into a cardboard box.

He exits the room with the box. Leaving all else behind.

INT. PARK LANE HOTEL - ROOM - DAY

AN HOUR LATER

Sykes and the Driver enter the hotel room. There's a POLICE CONSTABLE at the door, guarding the crime scene.

BET SYKES

We put in the sodding hours, and
the heavy brigade cock it up in
seconds. Typical. On your bike.

This last as she flashes a badge to the Constable, which makes him leave without a murmur.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

A flaming sniper? Why? Just knock
on the man's door. Daft buggers.

As she speaks, they efficiently ransack the room, searching. Nothing but a few suits and toiletries.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

They've got to be flash, haven't
they?

Sykes goes through the pockets of Thomas Wayne's suits. She pulls out a BUSINESS CARD.

INSERT on the card - PENNYWORTH SECURITY CONSULTANTS.

INT. ESME'S BEDSIT - DAY

Esme smokes a post-coital cigarette in bed while Alfred gets dressed.

Weeks have passed since we last saw them and they're in love and easy with each other...

ESME

I'm nervous. are you nervous?

ALFRED

No.

ESME

Why do you like me?

ALFRED
What sort of question is that?

ESME
An easy one I would have thought.

ALFRED
Let me think.

He thinks. She waits.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
You make me feel like anything is possible.

ESME
Good answer. Just in time.

ALFRED
I was going to say I like your boobs, but I thought better of it. I'm learning see?

ALFRED (CONT'D)
Fair play. Now you.

ESME
You're good in a row boat. You make me feel safe.

They kiss.

INT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY

Sunday lunch. The Pennyworth family - everyone on their best behavior - sat round the table eating steadily or staring at Esme. The telly's on, silently. The Battle Of Britain. Spitfires wheeling.

MRS PENNYWORTH
It's so nice to meet you at last Esme. Where did you get those earrings? They're very unusual.

ESME
Thank you, Mrs. Pennyworth. Mary. They're from India.

MRS PENNYWORTH
Oh, Alfred was in India, weren't you? Brought me back a lovely tablecloth.

ESME
You didn't tell me that.

MRS PENNYWORTH
He won medals there.

ALFRED
Nish, mum.

MRS PENNYWORTH
Well, you did. He's so modest.
Never talks about what he did.

ALFRED
Rules, mum.

MR PENNYWORTH
Esme. What does your father do?

ESME
He's a vicar, Mr. Pennyworth. Well,
more of a Dean.

MR PENNYWORTH
Ah, more of a Dean.

A hint of ironic amusement. MRS PENNYWORTH sees the danger signs.

MRS PENNYWORTH
More beef, Esme?

ESME
No, thank you, Mary.

MR PENNYWORTH
What does your father think of your
acting career?

MRS PENNYWORTH
Don't mind him, Esme. He'll be rude
if he likes.

MR PENNYWORTH
It's a perfectly polite question.
Acting's a respectable profession.
Nowadays.

We realize, now, he's a little drunk.

ESME
My father doesn't approve, Mr.
Pennyworth.

(MORE)

ESME (CONT'D)
But he's willing to let me try. He believes young people should have adventures.

MR PENNYWORTH
Good for him. Adventures. He approves of Alfred then, does he?

Esme's flustered.

ESME
I think he'll like Alfred very much.

MR PENNYWORTH
Ah, hasn't met him yet. But you think so. Good.

Esme's mortified.

ALFRED
Think you've had enough sherry, Dad.

MR PENNYWORTH
Who's to say?

ALFRED
Me.

Father and son glare at each other. Mr P pours himself another sherry. Drinks.

MRS PENNYWORTH
You're a mean man you are. I'm so sorry Esme.

ESME
That's quite alright.

The clinking of cutlery sounds like crickets.

EXT. EAST LONDON STREETS - DAY

Alfred walks Esme to the bus stop. Awkward silence.

ALFRED
Listen....

ESME
Don't apologize. You have a wonderful strong exuberant family. You should be proud of them.

ALFRED

I wasn't going to apologize. I am proud of them. I was going to say, I'm not my family. I'm not my dad. They're part of me. But not all of me. You're not just a vicar's daughter either, are you?

ESME

No. No, I'm not.

ALFRED

You and me, we can be whatever we want to be.

ESME

Can we?

ALFRED

I have a good feeling about us. I think you and me might have a future.

ESME

You and I.

ALFRED

I was thinking, as soon as I get my first good contract, we should rent a flat. Move in together.

She frowns.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

It's not living in sin or anything. Well it is, I suppose, strictly speaking, but lots of people are doing it these days.

ESME

I can't.

ALFRED

Somewhere up west, maybe. Or the river. Fancy a view of the river. Boats going up and down. You can't?

ESME

Alfred, I love you, I wish, I wish we could go away and live on a desert island together, but we can't. We're here.

ALFRED
What's wrong with here?

ESME
One day I want to be married and have children and live in a house with a nice garden and dogs and all that...

ALFRED
And what? We can have that.

ESME
Alfred, you work in a nightclub.

ALFRED
For now. I have plans. You know I have.

ESME
What's our future? Where are we going? How will we live?

ALFRED
We'll sort that out as we go. Like everyone else.

ESME
What if we end up poor? Squabbling in some squalid little flat.

ALFRED
I'm going to make something of myself, Esme. I am.

ESME
I know you are. I hope you are. But I think we should stop seeing each other. I think we come from two different worlds, and it's too difficult, and I'm sorry. And now I'm going to go.

With that she hurries away toward the main road. Leaving him bereft, stunned.

She stops at the curb to take out her hanky and blow her nose.

The grey Jaguar pulls up alongside her. Bet Sykes gets out of the car, opens the back door, steps up to Esme and punches her in the stomach. Doubled over, winded, stunned, unable to speak, Esme is thrown into the car.

Alfred sees all this happen and is sprinting toward the car almost instantly, but it's too late. The Jaguar glides away.

EXT. STREETS OF LONDON - CONTINUOUS

ALFRED CHASES the Jaguar. The Jaguar keeps teasing him, letting him get close, then speeding away again.

Alfred runs a mile before he collapses exhausted in the middle of the road.

At which point the Jaguar stops, backs up until it's alongside Alfred, on all fours in the street, gasping for air.

BET SYKES

Deep breaths, duck. Take your time.

Alfred struggles to get up, but can barely stand.

She tosses a balled up sheet of paper at him.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

Call us when you have Thomas Wayne.
We'll do a swap. You've got 'til
tomorrow lunchtime.

Alfred summons a desperate burst of energy and staggers toward the Jaguar, but it speeds away.

Alfred falls on his knees, has to take a moment to catch his breath.

ALFRED

Who's Thomas Wayne?!

He gets up and picks up the paper tossed at him by Sykes. Uncrumples it.

INSERT - a phone number on headed notepaper. No words, just the small logo of a Raven, its wings spread; and a handwritten phone number.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Alfred dashes in; interrupts the DESK SERGEANT at his paperwork.

ALFRED

There's been a kidnapping!

DESK SERGEANT

Is that right, sir?

ALFRED
My girlfriend. Esme Whittaker.

DESK SERGEANT
Oh, yes?

ALFRED
Took by a blonde woman in a grey
Jaguar. No plates. Took her off the
street.

DESK SERGEANT
Slow down, son. Have you been
drinking?

ALFRED
They left a note. Look!

He shows the Sergeant the note.

DESK SERGEANT
One moment, sir.

The Sergeant vanishes through a door. Alfred is left alone.
He paces back and forth, growing more and more impatient.

ALFRED
Oi! Hello!?

No response.. He tries the interior door. It's locked. Tries
the exterior door. That too is locked. He's trapped in the
reception area. WTF?

ALFRED (CONT'D)
Hey! Hello! What the hell?!

THE PUBLIC PAYPHONE STARTS TO RING.

Alfred takes a long beat - at first dismissing the RINGING
phone, then slowly getting the idea that the call is for him.
He answers the phone. Listens.

BET SYKES (O.S.)
(over phone)
What are you playing at love? Old
Bill can't help you. Fetch Thomas
Wayne like I told you.

ALFRED
I don't know who he is!

BET SYKES (O.S.)
For Esme's sake, I hope you're
lying. What a smasher she is, eh?
Skin like silk.

ALFRED
I swear to God--

BET SYKES
---Bring us the yank.

The line goes dead. ON Alfred, his mind racing. The identity of Thomas Wayne slowly dawns on him.

ALFRED
The Yank.

He runs to the exterior door. It's still locked.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
Open the door! Open the fucking
door, you bastards!

A remote buzzer unlocks the door, and Alfred races out.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

VARIOUS SHOTS - Alfred racing home.

INT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY

Alfred frantically goes through the pockets of his tuxedo jacket.

He finds the business card that Thomas Wayne gave him.

Alfred dials the handwritten number.

RECORDED VOICE
This number has been disconnected.

Alfred hangs up. Paces, thinking hard. He looks at the other side of the card. It's the business card of ROGER BATLEY, ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR with a phone number and address in Coombe Regis, Sussex.

MRS PENNYWORTH enters. Stops dead when she sees him.

MRS PENNYWORTH
What's wrong?

Alfred takes a long beat. A steely resolve taking over..

ALFRED
Nothing, mum.

INT. ROGER AND JANET BATLEY'S COTTAGE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

In a cosy cottage, cosy ROGER and JANET BATLEY, 50s, sit with tea and biscuits watching Sheepdog Trials on a black and white telly.

JANET
You watch, the bitch'll miss that gate.

Janet silently drops her tea cup when she looks up from the telly and finds there are three armed and balaclava'd men in the room with them - Alfred, Bazza, and Dave Boy.

ALFRED
Roger Batley?

Ronald nods. Alfred points a gun at him.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
I'm going to say a name, and you're going to tell us everything you know about that name. Understand?

Roger nods.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
Thomas Wayne.

ROGER
Renting Wexdale Farm. I put in high voltage cabling. He didn't say what for. Paid in cash, quick as you like. Nice chap. American.

INT. ROGER BATLEY'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

TEN MINUTES LATER. On the sofa, Roger's cuffed to Janet who's cuffed to the sofa arm, and they're back to watching the telly.

EXT. WEXDALE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

ESTABLISHING - A well-kept farmhouse in an isolated spot among wooded hills. Two LAND ROVERS in the driveway.

We find Alfred and Dave concealed close to the farm crouching behind a hedgerow. Dave shivers and mutters and takes a swig from a flask, offers it to Alfred, who shakes his head.

ALFRED
You alright?

DAVE BOY
Magic. Auld Lang Syne, eh?

ALFRED
Dave Boy, you understand. We're not
here to blot anyone.

DAVE BOY
Oh, aye. Aye. Understood.

Bazza comes creeping back from a recce.

BAZZA
Cake. Infrared perimeter alarm,
spot lights. But no dogs, no
outside men.

EXT. WEXDALE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

VARIOUS SHOTS - Wearing balaclavas, the three men go about
their business with swift efficiency.

They bypass the infrared alarm at a junction box.

They crawl across open ground.

They gather at the farmhouse's back door, and take a silent
count.

Alfred kicks in the door. BOOOM! They dash inside.

INT. WEXDALE FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Converted into a makeshift office. Fax and adding machines,
piles of papers and files and account books.

Thomas Wayne looks up at the sound of commotion... And in
the same instant, Alfred et al enter, guns up.

ALFRED
Hands on your head! Now!

Thomas obeys. Dave Boy quickly cuffs his hands behind his
back. Then disappears to search the house for other people.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
You're Thomas Wayne, aren't you?

THOMAS
Uh, no.

Alfred points his gun.

ALFRED
Don't lie to me mate.

THOMAS
I'm Thomas Wayne.

BAZZA
Are you alone?

THOMAS
Yes.

Alfred et al remove balaclavas. We see Thomas recognize him, and try to work out where he knows him from.

ALFRED
Where's your phone?

Thomas nods his head in the right direction. Alfred goes to the phone; dials the number given to him by Bet Sykes.

THOMAS
Whatever you're getting paid, I'm willing and able to pay you far more. Name a price.

ALFRED
Quiet.

DAVE BOY
Hold on now. He said name a price.

BAZZA
Hush.

INTERCUT

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - NIGHT

A dingy institutional break room. A few chairs, a formica table, a sink, a kettle, a portrait of the Queen.

BET SYKES enters and answers a ringing wall-mounted phone.

BET SYKES
Hello.

ALFRED
I have him.

BET SYKES

Goodo. Meet us at Wormwood Scrubs,
East gates. Three o'clock.

ALFRED

I need more time.

BET SYKES

Five o'clock.

ALFRED

I'll be there. Let me speak to
Esme.

BET SYKES

Sorry, duck. More than my job's
worth. Five o'clock then. And
Alfred, if you're thinking of
skullduggery, think on.

They both hang up.

INT. BAZZA'S ROVER IN MOTION - COTSWOLDS COUNTRY LANE - NIGHT

Bazza at the wheel of a Rover Coupe. Dave Boy alongside him.
Alfred and Thomas in back, scared but rational...

ALFRED

Tell me everything you know about
these people that want you.

THOMAS

I don't know who they are.
You're the doorman from that
nightclub, aren't you? Excuse my
memory, what was your name?

ALFRED

Never you mind. Talk.

THOMAS

I'm a financial forensics analyst.
I recently discovered a banking
fraud. A large illicit transfer of
money. Evidently part of some far
reaching criminal conspiracy.
I don't know the identity of the
conspirators, but they've already
tried to kill me.

ALFRED

How?

THOMAS

A what do you call them, a sniper.
In my hotel room.

BAZZA

A good hotel I presume.

THOMAS

Park Lane.

BAZZA

Sounds like a top firm.

ALFRED

Doesn't it? Does this mean anything
to you?

He shows Thomas the raven notepaper.

THOMAS

No.

ALFRED

Nothing?

THOMAS

Nothing. Look here. I assume Esme
is somebody very close to you, so I
can't appeal to your compassion or
your avarice. I appeal to your
reason. If they kill me, they have
to kill you. They can't leave loose
ends. The stakes are too high.
There will be no exchange.

ALFRED

That's possible. If you have some
alternative plan I'm happy to
listen.

THOMAS

I'm not qualified to form such a
plan.

ALFRED

I can't think of anything else
either.

INT. CELL - CONTINUOUS

A bare windowless room. A table, a chair, a cot.

Esme sits on the cot. Dishevelled and terrified. Jaunty pop
music plays over a built-in wall speaker.

Bet Sykes enters with a tea pot and cups and saucers on a tray. She sets down the tray and sits on the cot.

BET SYKES

Cheer up pet. A nice cuppa and a biscuit will sort you out.

ESME

I didn't do anything. I don't know anything. Please don't hurt me.

BET SYKES

Oh relax. I won't bite. We've other staff for that. Your boyfriend's a character isn't he? Thinks you've gold knickers on that one.

She gently brushes frozen Esme's hair off her face. Esme flinches.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

Hear tell you're a dancer are you?

Esme nods slightly.

BET SYKES (CONT'D)

Speak up.

ESME

Yes.

BET SYKES

Any good?

ESME

Not really.

BET SYKES

Go on. I bet you're a right little cracker. I love dancing, me.

EXT. WORMWOOD SCRUBS WASTELAND - EARLY MORNING

ESTABLISHING - A bombed-out no man's land.

The Rover is parked on open ground, the ENGINE RUNNING.

IN THE ROVER -

Alfred at the wheel, Thomas alongside. Waiting. Thomas is terrified but trying to remain calm. Dave Boy and Bazza are not around.

THOMAS
Is Esme your wife?

ALFRED
No.

THOMAS
Girlfriend.

ALFRED
As it happens, she dumped me about
a minute before your friends took
her.

THOMAS
Why did she do that?

ALFRED
Not good enough for her.

Thomas thinks about that.

THOMAS
Perhaps you're better off without
her. Perhaps you're selling our
lives for an unworthy woman.
You'll forgive my bluntness.
I don't want to die.

ALFRED
I forgive your bluntness. Married,
are you? No, wait, I don't want to
know.

THOMAS
I'm not.

ALFRED
Well, good.

THOMAS
I ask one favour. In the unlikely
event you survive me, please tell
my parents that I faced death
honorably.

ALFRED
Really? That's what you want to
say?

THOMAS
Why not?

ALFRED

Your shout mate. I'll try to keep you alive, but if things go pear shaped I'll tell 'em that. And it's true. You've been very decent about all this. My name's Alfred Pennyworth by the way.

THOMAS

Mister Pennyworth, I urge you to reconsider....

The SOUND OF CARS APPROACHING.

TWO CARS in convoy come into view. They split up and flank the Rover. One of the cars has a bullhorn attachment.

MAN'S VOICE OVER BULLHORN

Everyone in the Rover, step out with your hands raised.

Alfred leans out of the window.

ALFRED

Let me see Esme!

THOMAS

She's not there.

MAN'S VOICE OVER BULLHORN

Step out of the car with your hands raised!

THOMAS

I told you.

Alfred shoots Thomas an irritated look before leaning out the window.

ALFRED

Not until I see her!

Two men in suits emerge with machine guns, one from each car. They level the guns at the Rover, confirming the truth of Thomas' assertion.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Buggery.

MAN'S VOICE OVER BULLHORN

Step out of the car! Do it! Now!

ALFRED

Okay! Okay! We're coming!
 (quietly to Thomas)
 Get down on the floor and brace
 yourself.

Alfred dabs the horn - BEEP - and puts his foot down. The Rover surges forward; simultaneously, TWO RIFLES RING OUT, felling both Gunmen with shots to the knee.

After a beat, the two cars ROAR away in pursuit of the Land Rover, leaving the wounded gunmen writhing in the mud.

But Alfred doesn't try to get away, he slews around in a tight circle and drives straight at the first of the oncoming cars. At the same time, Bazza and Dave Boy jump up from cover and BLAZE AWAY at the occupants of both cars.

The Rover slews hard left and slams on the brakes and the two Jaguars slam into each other.

ON THE FLOOR OF THE ROVER - Thomas huddles as small as he can while gunfire and shouting rise to a crescendo O.S.

Then it all goes silent. Cautiously, Thomas rises and peeks out...

INT. CELL - DAY

Bet Sykes and Esme dance to an upbeat pop song. Esme is in a fugue state of unhappiness, but moves to the beat as best she can while Sykes does her thing.

A PHONE STARTS RINGING O.S. Sykes reluctantly disengages.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

THE WALL PHONE RINGING. Bet Sykes answers.

BET SYKES

Hello.

EXT. WORMWOOD SCRUBS WASTELAND - INTERCUT

Alfred is on a giant mobile phone in one of the Suit's cars. There's six Suits motionless and bloody lined up on the ground.

Alfred's angry. We've not seen him angry before.

ALFRED

Your team is all dead. Completely
 bloody unnecessary.

(MORE)

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I bet some of these lads have got wives and children.

BET SYKES

What do you want to do now?

ALFRED

Start again. Same deal. Wayne for Esme. Only this time don't mess me about. If you do, Wayne goes to the U.S. Embassy.

BET SYKES

Where and when?

ALFRED

Let me speak to Esme. No deal if I don't speak to her.

A MOMENT LATER

Esme is led out into the reception room by Sykes, who holds the phone to Esme's ear.

ESME

Hello?

ALFRED

Esme! Are you alright?

ESME

Nooo.

ALFRED

Have they hurt you?

ESME

No.

ALFRED

Everything's going to be alright. I'm coming to get you.

ESME

Yes, please.

Sykes takes the phone.

ALFRED

Nobody's going to hurt you. It's just a misunderstanding--

BET SYKES

--Where and when?

ALFRED
The elephant house at London Zoo.
Three hours.

He hangs up.

INT. ROVER/EXT. WORMWOOD SCRUBS WASTELAND - CONTINUOUS

THOMAS, in the Rover, is frustrated.

THOMAS
For Pete's sakes, don't you know
they're going to do the exact same
thing again? She won't be there.

BAZZA
That's what we're counting on.

Alfred goes to the gunmen and rolls two of them over, wounded
but still very much alive.

Alfred shows them a gun.

ALFRED
Lads, one of you is taking us to
Esme sharpish or they'll be serious
grief. I'm not messing about.

Dave scowls in contempt at this unconvincing approach.

DAVE BOY
Alfie man, step away, step away.

Dave steps up, and shoots both men in the knee. They scream
in agony.

DAVE BOY (CONT'D)
You heard the man! Which one of you
grizzling bastards wants to live?

SUIT #1
Fuck you!

Dave shoots Suit #1 in the head. Dave turns to Alfred...

DAVE BOY
No bother.

ALFRED
(angry)
Why did you do that?

DAVE BOY

That was the convincer. Your man's convinced now, isn't he? Aren't you?

SUIT #2

(eagerly)

Harwood House. In the basement.
Room 101.

Dave Boy gestures as to say see?

ALFRED

We're not bloody animals.

Dave Boy is crestfallen.

DAVE BOY

Ah fuck Alfie. Was that wrong? I just did it. That's me eh? Sorry.

ALFRED

Never mind. I'm, never mind. Let's go.

INT. CELL - DAY

Cilla Black sings SOMETHING'S GOTTEN HOLD OF MY HEART while Esme and Sykes slow dance, close. Sykes has her eyes closed, deep into the song. Esme's scared but thinking...

The door's open. Maybe she has a chance to escape...
She looks around for a weapon. The tea pot!

When Sykes next brings her near enough, Esme grabs the teapot and smashes it on Sykes' head. With a SCREECH, Sykes goes down stunned and burned by hot tea.

Martha gives her a kick in the stomach and runs from the room.

We follow her down several HALLWAYS and up a FLIGHT OF STAIRS, pursued by Sykes, who catches up and grabs her ankle. Esme kicks and sends Sykes tumbling down the stairs.

Esme crashes through the door at the top of the stairs INTO...

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - BACK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Esme finds herself in the back hallway of a beautifully appointed manor house.

She dashes toward the nearest doorway and into...

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esme dashes in and stops dead, disoriented. A lively luncheon party is in full swing around a tastefully laid table. TWELVE GUESTS and LORD AND LADY HARWOOD presiding.

They all stop in mid-chatter and turn to stare at Esme - torn dress, make-up running.

ESME

Help! I'm being held captive!

Shocked silence reigns. Sykes comes barging in and tackles Esme.

They have a brief but vicious wrestle on the floor and Sykes prevails. She gets to her feet.

SYKES

Very sorry your Lordship sir. Won't happen again.

HARWOOD

Take her to Parslow in 101, then go home immediately. Your incompetence will be dealt with tomorrow.

Sykes takes Martha away.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

Please forgive the intrusion. My work for the country is honorable and necessary but sometimes, ugly. I'm mortified that you had to see such a sordid display.

GUESTS AD LIB

Not at all. Quite understand. Rather exciting. Etc.

EXT. WORMWOOD SCRUBS WASTELAND - DAY

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR JAMES MORIARTY OF SCOTLAND YARD - 40s, dark, brilliant - gazes gloomily at the corpses.

A JUNIOR DETECTIVE hands him a RAVEN LAPEL PIN.

JUNIOR DETECTIVE

Mister Moriarty sir, all of them are wearing these.

Moriarty grimaces, a suspicion confirmed.

SCOTLAND YARD

Blackbirds. Just our ruddy luck.
Be a dear, call the Downing Street
wallahs, and tell them we have a
problem.

INT. ROOM 101 - DAY

On a slab table in the corner, Lord Fairfax's corpse is laid
out in a see through body bag.

Parslow locks terrified Esme to the same BLOODSTAINED CHAIR
that Fairfax sat in.

PARSLOW

There we go miss... Gently does
it... Lovely, thank you.

INT. PARKED ROVER/EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - NEARBY PHONE BOX - DAY

Alfred is in the front seat of the battered Rover. Bazza at
the wheel. Dave Boy in back with Thomas.

ALFRED

If you don't hear from me in one
hour take him to the American
Embassy. If the swap is still on,
I'll call the phone box. Three
rings means bring him in.

BAZZA

Righto.

ALFRED

No coming in after me unless
I ring. That's an order.

DAVE BOY

See him.

BAZZA

You're not a sargeant now Alfie.

ALFRED

It's an order.

THOMAS

If I may say--

ALFRED

--No you may not.
(to Dave Boy and Bazza)
One hour. Then go to the embassy.

BAZZA
Heard you Alfie.

Alfred gets out of the car, carrying a small duffel bag.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE AND ENVIRONS - CONTINUOUS

We follow Alfred as he walks briskly down a leafy suburban avenue. He ducks into bushes, takes out a SILENCED PISTOL, a and a COSH and dons a BLACK BALACLAVA.

He scales a wall and finds himself on the manicured grounds of a VICTORIAN NEO-GOTHIC MANSION.

He ghosts across the grounds to the edge of the House.

A GUARD at a STAFF ENTRANCE doesn't see Alfred coming and gets hit with the cosh.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - STAFF ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Alfred enters. A Grey Suit sits at a reception desk. Rather than shoot him, Alfred smiles cheerily as he walks toward the man...

ALFRED
Hello mate. Is Fred in?

Confusing the man long enough to get close and knock him out with the cosh.

Alfred runs downstairs to the basement.

INT. CLERICAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Startled CLERKS look up from their paperwork as Alfred enters, gun up.

ALFRED
Room 101.

They all point the same way. Alfred hurries through another door. One of the clerks presses an alarm button.

A KLAXON HOOTS LOUDLY.

INT. HALLWAYS. HARWOOD HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Alfred runs down a maze of hallways. He comes to a locked door and a dead end. He throws himself against it, but it's made of iron. He turns and runs back, but the door behind him has shut and locked too. Trapped.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - NEARBY PHONE BOX - DAY

In the Rover, Thomas et al are still waiting. The dashboard clock ticking by.

INT. ROOM 101 - DAY

Parslow does a crossword puzzle. Esme is breathing deep, trying to stave off blind panic.

PARSLOW

Sorry to keep you waiting miss.
There's a proper hoo ha upstairs.
We'll get started soon as they sort
it out.

ESME

You're you're a horrible little
creature. I hope you die of
something terrible.

PARSLOW

I don't take offense miss. We get
all sorts of language in here.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tea and biscuits for Alfred and Harwood at a little table.
Alfred's somewhat disoriented. THREE GREY SUITS with guns up
are ranged around the room. A UNION JACK hangs on one wall.
At the flag's center is a black raven, wings spread.

Harwood plays mother.

ALFRED

Milky, one sugar.

HARWOOD

Thank you so much for coming
Alfred. My name is Lord Harwood.

ALFRED

How'd you do.

HARWOOD

The elephant house was a lovely
touch.

EXT. ZOO - DAY

Four Grey Suits loitering expectantly under the solemn gaze
of an African Elephant.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

HARWOOD

I like a man with a sense of humour. Have you heard of the Raven Society?

ALFRED

You run a lot of herberts with guns. The old bill are scared of you. You're some kind of secret gestapo.

HARWOOD

Dear me, not at all. We have no silly Goth regalia or skulls and what have you. We're simply dedicated patriots.

ALFRED

And you're the top man are you?

HARWOOD

Oh gosh no. A mere foot soldier.

ALFRED

If I don't call my colleagues inside the next ten minutes they're coming in.

HARWOOD

Unless you have a battalion of colleagues, I rather think we'll survive. Please understand, I wish neither you nor Esme any harm. All I want is Thomas Wayne, or rather, his silence. I will have it with your help or without.

ALFRED

Why are we talking then?

HARWOOD

Your army records say you were a quartermaster in the Catering Corps. That's not true, is it?

ALFRED

The Army never lies.

HARWOOD

SAS one supposes.

Alfred says nothing.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

I know some of your officers.
Fine fellows. About evenly divided
between strong minded patriots and
bloody lunatics. Which are you?

ALFRED

You tell me.

HARWOOD

I don't think you're a lunatic.
I think you're a man of sense.
I think you can see Alfred, that
this great nation is at war with
itself. The forces of order and
virtue are battling profound evil.

ALFRED

Still, mustn't grumble.

HARWOOD

Do you know what this country
needs?

ALFRED

I know you're going to tell me.

HARWOOD

Love. Only the love of true
patriots can pull this country from
the foul quagmire of immorality and
corruption and sin into which we
have fallen. The battle begins very
soon.

ALFRED

What battle?

HARWOOD

I speak figuratively. Technically,
you'd have to call it a coup
d'etat.

Alfred now sees what the whole affair is about.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

What do you think about that?

ALFRED

As a rule, if you have to use
French words for something, I don't
like it.

HARWOOD

Touché. But Alfred, you're a soldier. You know. Desperate times call for desperate measures. We are going to take back this country from corrupt weaklings in the name of the Queen and loyal British Patriots.

ALFRED

Does the Queen know?

Harwood smiles donnishly.

HARWOOD

Not yet. If her Majesty doesn't wish for the moral rebirth of the nation, there are other members of the Royal Family who certainly do.

ALFRED

I bet there are.

HARWOOD

My people are the vanguard troops. But we have several fine regiments with us, front bench Lords and MPS, churchmen, businessmen. Good people. We shall succeed. There shall be a new dawn. The struggle will be cruel and hard. As all noble struggles are. We'll need men like you to help. Strong men.

ALFRED

You're offering me a job?

HARWOOD

A mission.

ALFRED

What would I be doing exactly?

HARWOOD

Radical change inevitably requires a degree of physical force.

ALFRED

Violence, you mean.

HARWOOD

That is your metier, is it not?

ALFRED

There you go again. That was foreigners. For the Queen. You're talking about British people.

HARWOOD

Traitors, criminals, deviants.

(beat)

A brand new life, Alfred. There'll be money and power and all that comes with it, of course. Your family will want for nothing. But the true gift I'm offering you is a life of purpose and meaning. A life that matters.

(beat)

Your friends too, of course, can have that same gift. If you vouch for them.

ALFRED

Oh yes, top lads.

HARWOOD

Bring me Thomas Wayne to prove your commitment. Esme will be released scot-free and life begins anew.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

I'll bring you Wayne and I'll join your society. But you let Esme go first.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)

And lose my only bargaining chip? I'm afraid not.

ALFRED

What's to stop you topping us all soon as you have Wayne?

HARWOOD

What have I been saying? You're far too valuable a man to kill willy-nilly. I need you. Your country needs you.

(offers phone)

Call your friends. Tell them you've come to amicable terms. As soon as they bring in Thomas Wayne, Esme goes free.

Alfred is not immune to Harwood's sales pitch.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)
Call them Alfred.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - NEARBY PHONE BOX - DAY

Thomas, Dave, Bazza and the hapless suit are waiting in tense silence, ENGINE RUNNING.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alfred considers the phone.

HARWOOD
Call them.

Alfred takes a biscuit, leans back. Eats it.

ALFRED
I do love a garibaldi. I don't like
doing violence. And I don't like
you mate. Don't trust you.
I strongly suspect you'll tuck us
up. In fact I know you will.

HARWOOD
Ah well. Your trust I could earn,
but a squeamish soldier isn't very
useful, is he? Pity. You're a good
man, and Esme deserves none of
this.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - NEARBY PHONE BOX - DAY

Dave et al in the parked Land Rover. The car's clock ticks
down to the agreed deadline.

Dave takes a long drink from his flask.

BAZZA
Dammit.

He puts the car in gear.

DAVE BOY
Hold on. I'll get out here.

BAZZA
You heard him. No going in after.

DAVE BOY
I'm not deaf am I? It's your awful
driving Bazza. Makes me sick.
I'd rather walk.

BAZZA

It's a long way home.

DAVE BOY

You know me Bazza, always up for a good tab.

They look at each other. Bazza nods, accepting Dave's decision.

DAVE BOY (CONT'D)

If shite occurs and you're playing Lili Marlene for me, I'd like an Islay single malt, not too peaty.

BAZZA

Done. Cheerio brother.

Dave Boy gets out of the car. Bazza pulls away into the road, cursing softly in Bajan. From one end of which comes TWO GREY SUITS, on foot, guns out.

The Rover ROARS off in the opposite direction while Dave Boy walks nonchalantly toward the Grey Suits. As soon as they start to raise their weapons, he shoots both of them once and strolls on toward the Harwood House front gates.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Harwood and Alfred listen to THE GUNSHOTS ECHO.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Dave Boy peers around the gates of the house. Sees nobody around.

ANGLE - we see what he doesn't. A HALF DOZEN ARMED GREY SUITS in hiding.

Dave Boy takes a last drink, throws away the flask. Lights a cigarette, takes a couple of deep draws, and puts it out.

He moves slowly through the open gates and onto the grounds of the house. The Suits let him get well inside the grounds before they open up. Dave Boy gets shot in the side.

He finds cover and takes a beat to steady himself. He's badly wounded.

DAVE BOY

Fecksake.

EXT. ROVER IN MOTION - DAY

Bazza curses and slams on the brakes. Turns to Thomas.

BAZZA

Get out.

Thomas gets out. Bazza does a screaming U turn.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

In scant cover, Dave Boy reloads. Grey Suits are creeping nearer.

DAVE BOY

(yelling)

Alfie! It's me! Dave Boy!

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alfred and Harwood listen to Dave's voice...

DAVE BOY O.S.

Saving your sassnach arse again!

Alfred groans.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Dave Boy steps out into plain view and runs/staggers up the driveway, his weapon held loosely at his side.

GREY SUIT

Halt there!

GREY SUIT (CONT'D)

Halt!

Dave keeps on. A warning shot. Dave replies with a shot of his own, which triggers a BARRAGE OF GUNFIRE. Dave staggers forward, FIRING WILDLY.

The Rover comes speeding through the gates, slews to a stop, and Bazza opens up with a pair of Purdey shotguns.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Alfred and Harwood listen as the SOUNDS OF A GUN BATTLE RISE then DIE AWAY. A beat of echoing silence.

HARWOOD

Bring me a damage report.

One of the Grey Suits hurries out. Now Alfred is guarded by only two men with guns.

HARWOOD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry about your friends. This
is war. There will be bloodshed.

ALFRED
That's true.

With that, he flurries into action TBD which leaves the guard KO'd and Alfred in possession of the gun, despite his cuffed hands.

Harwood raises his hands.

HARWOOD
Alfred, think what you're doing.

Alfred mimes thinking then hits Harwood with the butt of the gun, knocking him out, and rushes from the room.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

MONTAGE - Alfred moves through the house, brutally fighting and shooting his way past a half dozen Grey Suits, no match for his terrible skills. Alfred is forced to become once more the animal he had hoped to bury. It's a horrible slaughter. Grey Suits run off in disarray.

Alfred finds room 101, and kicks in the door.

INT. ROOM 101 - CONTINUOUS

Esme cowers in her chair as Alfred busts in. He's covered in blood. His eyes are wild and wide. He looks like a madman.

Parslow picks up a hammer and backs away.

Alfred leaps at Parslow like a tiger and breaks his neck in an instant.

The two lovers look at each other in shocked silence.

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Grey Suits pour out of the building hastening to get away in cars and on foot. POLICE CARS roar up, SIRENS WAILING.

DETECTIVE SCOTLAND gets out of one of the police cars and watches the fleeing Suits, surprised.

SCOTLAND YARD

Hmmm.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Silent and somber, Alfred leads Esme out of the house through a gauntlet of dead and maimed bodies. Everyone has fled.

O.S. POLICE SIRENS

EXT. HARWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Alfred and Esme emerge from the front doors as a gaggle of POLICEMEN including Moriarty come hurrying up the driveway on foot.

They converge on Bazza, kneeling over Dave Boy's motionless body.

SCOTLAND YARD

Good morning madame, gentlemen.
Detective Inspector Moriarty,
Scotland Yard. Spot of bother?

INT. POLICE CAR/EXT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - DAY

Early morning. The milk man clatters by. A police car pulls up outside. Alfred and Esme are in the back of the car, both bandaged and cleaned up. Fresh clothes. There's a strange distance between them.

ALFRED

Here we are.

Esme nods. Beat.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Would you like to come in for a cup
of tea?

ESME

No. Thank you. I need to sleep.

ALFRED

Of course.

ESME

Thank you for saving me.

ALFRED

I'm very glad you're safe.

ESME

Well, bye.

ALFRED

Bye.

Alfred gets out of the car and watches it drive away, picks up a bottle of milk before he goes inside.

INT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Preoccupied, Alfred enters and takes a beat before he notices his dad sitting in his usual chair, looking very strange. Then sees his MRS PENNYWORTH sitting on the sofa with BET SYKES, a gun in her lap. THE DRIVER covers the whole room with a shotgun.

BET SYKES

Hello again.

ALFRED

Hello.

BET SYKES

Where's Esme then?

ALFRED

I don't know.

BET SYKES

Get away. You just rescued her.
Where is she?

ALFRED

She's left me.

BET SYKES

There's gratitude eh? The little minx.

ALFRED

I'm sorry Miss, I don't know your name. Whatever it is you want, I'll try to sort it out for you, but you don't need to bring my mum and dad into it.

BET SYKES

No I don't. But that's just me.
Vindictive.

MISTER PENNYWORTH

Bloody deviant. Don't talk to her Alfred.

BET SYKES

Now then now then. Be nice.
And mind you don't keep creeping
toward me like that, or we'll have
your MRS PENNYWORTH's guts all over
this nice settee. I like your mum.
She's got gumption. Haven't you?

MRS PENNYWORTH

You're not well, love. You need
doctors.

BET SYKES

Cheek. I'm fit as a fiddle, me.
It's you looks peaky. Where's Esme?

ALFRED

(conciliatory)

Honestly, I don't know. I wish I
did.

BOOM. BOOM. Someone on the street knocks loudly on the front
door. Everyone freezes. Listens...

BET SYKES

(whispers to Alfred)

Tell them to go away.

ALFRED

(calling out)

Go away.

ESME (O.S.)

Alfie, it's me.

Bet Sykes grins. Alfred look stricken.

BET SYKES

Anyone opens their gob, shoot mum.

Sykes tiptoes to the front door.

INTERCUT

EXT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - INTERCUT

At the door, Esme KNOCKS again.

ESME

I'm sorry Alfie. I'm sorry I said
goodbye like that.

She starts talking through the letter box to save her voice.

ESME (CONT'D)

Please don't be angry with me.
I've been a wretched fool.
Can I talk with you? Please?

No reply.

ESME (CONT'D)

Alfie?

The door opens and there's Sykes.

BET SYKES

Hello pet.

Esme opens her mouth to scream and Sykes drags her into the house, slams the door.

INT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - CONTINUOUS

Sykes hustles Esme into the front room.

SYKES

You can stop worrying now Alfie.
Here she is. Poor lad thought you'd left him.

(to Mum)

I told her I said, that lad thinks you've gold knickers on.

Alfred quivers, ready to attack.

SYKES (CONT'D)

Put that gun in his ear.

The driver puts the shotgun to Alfred's head.

SYKES (CONT'D)

Last time I saw this lass she made me look a right clown. Didn't you eh? Why? Why? I was nice to you wasn't I? I could have done all sorts, but I didn't did I?

ESME

I apologise.

SYKES

Apology not accepted. I hate snobby cows like you. You're all the same. Show some kindness and they treat you like dirt.

ALFRED

Miss? Can I ask you something?

SYKES

Shut it you. I'm not dirt Esme.
I'm a human being just like you.
I've got feelings too, d'you see?

ESME

Yes, I do. I see that now.

SYKES

She sees it now. So you admit that
you thought I were dirt before.

ESME

No, I never thought that.

SYKES

You little liar.

Sykes slaps her.

ESME

Please don't do that.

SYKES

Or else what?

She slaps Esme a second time. Esme sees red and SLAPS SYKES so hard she stagger sideways. Mum jumps up and punches Sykes in the nose, then Dad hits her over the head with the milk bottle. In the same instant, Alfred grabs the shotgun and both barrels go off into the ceiling.

Mum, dad, and esme lay into Sykes like maniacs until She's disarmed and beaten senseless.

Meanwhile Alfred wrestles the Driver to the floor as they struggle for the shotgun. The Driver's immensely strong and Alfred is already weak and injured. He's getting beat badly until Mum and Dad join in and the Pennyworth family unite in beating the Driver senseless.

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. DOWNING STREET - DAY

An AIDE opens the door, puts his head in.

AIDE

Prime Minister, the American
Ambassador is on the phone.

The PRIME MINISTER is leaning elegantly against his desk -
the spitting image of Lord Lucan.

PRIME MINISTER

Thank you, Roger.

The Prime Minister picks up a phone.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Hank! How splendid to hear from you.

(listens)

Thank you so much, Hank. Most kind of you to cry cavey, but we know all about that little situation and we've taken care of it. Storm in a teacup. A few disgruntled civil servants will lose their pensions, no doubt. But otherwise, no harm, no foul as you people say.

We move to reveal that Lord Harwood is kneeling on the carpet naked, cuffed, gagged, and bloody.

EXT. LONDON - DAY

ESTABLISHING. A sunny morning.

EXT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - DAY

ESTABLISHING.

INT. PENNYWORTH HOUSEHOLD - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

A bandaged invalid in pajamas, Alfred lies on the couch in a makeshift recovery room. He's woken from a doze when Esme sits down next to him, gives him a cup of herbal tea.

He takes a sip. Grimaces.

ESME

Elderflower. Good for your liver.

ALFRED

Must be good for something. Where's Mum and Dad.

ESME

Shops. Pub.

ALFRED

Give us a kiss.

Esme leans in. BOOM. BOOM. A knock on the front door makes them both startle a little.

A MOMENT LATER

Instinctively not pleased to see him, Esme ushers Thomas Wayne into the room.

THOMAS

I hope I'm not intruding.

ALFRED

Mr. Wayne. Have a seat. Sorry about the mess.

THOMAS

Please, just Thomas. I think our interesting time together warrants the familiarity.

He sits down.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I have a proposition for you. I'm on my way back to the States now, but I've been promoted to a new desk, and I'll be back on a regular basis for business. If I have security needs, perhaps you and I could come to some kind of arrangement? An annual contract perhaps, or services rendered, whichever you prefer.

Alfred's surprised. Esme's troubled.

ALFRED

Well, that's very amiable of you. I'd've thought you'd resent me for abducting you and that.

THOMAS

Not at all. No hard feelings. Just the highest respect for your competence.

ESME

Your business jolly near got us killed.

ALFRED

She's not wrong.

ESME

What exactly is your business Mister Wayne?

THOMAS

Please, Thomas. I'm in international finance and trade logistics analysis, political research and so forth.

ALFRED

What's that mean?

THOMAS

It's mostly paper pushing to be honest. But all above board. Legitimate and respectable.

ESME

Except that people want to kill you.

ALFRED

She's not wrong.

This is not going as well as Thomas had expected.

THOMAS

An unfortunate anolamy. Anomaly.

ESME

I don't mean to be rude Mister Wayne, but people don't get shot at for no reason. I think you're a suspicious character.

Thomas bristles.

THOMAS

The company I work for works for the Government of the United States of America, so you may be assured I operate under the strictest standards of honour and justice.

ALFRED

(of course)

Aaah.

THOMAS

Aaah?

ALFRED

You're a hat job.

THOMAS

Pardon?

ALFRED
A spook, a spy.

ESME
Oh. Ah.

THOMAS
Ha ha, very good. No. I'm nothing
of the sort.

ALFRED
Really? Swear on your mum.

THOMAS
My mother is not germane. My work
is confidential certainly, and
international security issues are
sometimes involved, but that
doesn't make me a spy.

ALFRED
(to Esme)
Spy.

ESME
Whatever you are Mister Wayne,
Alfie doesn't need a job.
He'll have all sorts of business
opportunities once he gets his
medal.

THOMAS
Medal?

ESME
He's going to be famous, a national
hero.

INT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE - DAY

Looking terrified, Alfred stands at attention in a grand room
draped in velvet and flock, strewn with gilt chairs and sofas
and portraits of Kings and Queens.

Double doors open and QUEEN ELIZABETH II glides into the
room. She stops ten feet from Alfred and beckons him.

She's young and beautiful, around Alfred's age. Sparkling
gems in her hair and the cleavage of a shimmering silk gown.

Alfred hesitates.

THE QUEEN
Come along. I won't bite.

He approaches her.

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

I'm so very grateful to you Alfred.
Eternally deeply grateful. You may
have saved my throne.

She takes great care pinning A MEDAL to his chest. Alfred is
bursting with pride and flustered libido.

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

(leaning in)

You must promise me one thing.

ALFRED

Of course Your Majesty. Anything.

THE QUEEN

Promise me your silence. Were it
known this terrible episode would
shake the nation. You must never
tell a soul what you did for your
country.

ALFRED

Never, ma'am. Not a soul.
I promise.

THE QUEEN

My dear loyal friend, thank you.

She kisses him gently on the cheek, eyes open. Her private
smile says 'job done'.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW